

International Conference
Silk Roads by Land and Sea

Call for Papers

2nd Announcement



9-12 March 2022

Muscat (Oman) / Zoom Platform

International Conference
Silk Roads by Land and Sea

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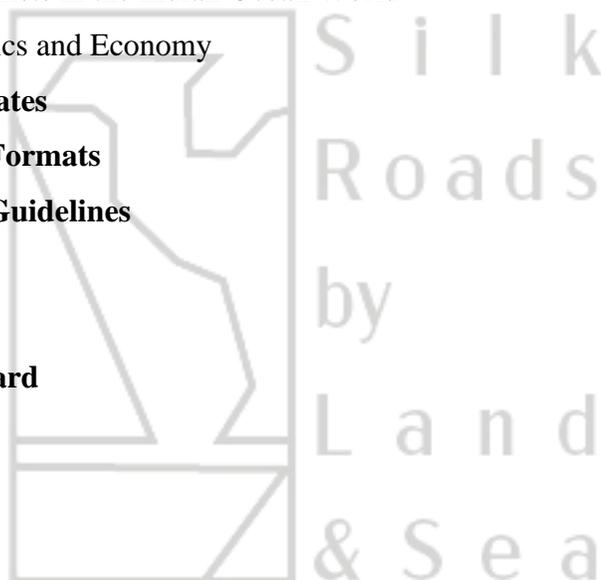
The logo of the conference portrays the Silk Routes and the movements connected with them through the graphic representation of a ship and a camel, سفينة الصحراء, "Safinat al Sahara" in Arabic (*the ship of the desert*).

Design: Aisha al Khalili

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2. About the Conference

The Research Centre Indian Ocean – RIO, jointly with its partners, is organizing an International Conference on “The Silk Roads by Land and Sea”, at the German University of Technology in Oman (GUtech).

In one of its most basic aims, this conference seeks to contribute to the emerging field of “mobility studies”. It offers a venue for empirical, but also theoretical and methodological, studies concerned with the historical movements of people and things, both on sea and on land. By looking at the mobility of human beings, animals, plants and material objects, but also of ideas, ideologies, models of statecraft, modes of consumption, technologies, information, ritual ideas and practices, philosophies, life-styles, fashions, or bodily expressions, we also like to draw attention, not only to the routes of travel, but also to special places where movements are set in motion, but also stopped. Hence, this conference is not only about the routes along which travel takes place, but it is also concerned with the most salient hubs that make circulation and flows possible, or else provide blockages. And it is looking at the internal qualities and dynamics of these hubs that do not just transport things, but also transform and translate the meanings, values and functions of the things that arrive and stay there for a while.

The term *Silk Road(s)* was first coined in 1877 for the overland roads by Ferdinand von Richthofen to describe the overland networks between the Eastern Mediterranean and China.

In 2014, “*The Silk Roads: The Routes Network of Chang'an - Tian-shan Corridor*” were inscribed on the World Heritage List as serial nomination of one important section of Silk Roads by Land. An attempt to place the Indian ‘*Project Mausam*’ on the World Heritage List is so far in its initial stage; ‘*Mausam*’ - the Arabic word *mawsim* referring to the season when it is safe for boats to set their sails - aims at connecting countries of the Indian Ocean culturally and economically.

Accordingly, the term Silk Road(s) shall here refer to any form of a trade route between the Eastern Mediterranean and South-East Asia, by Land and Sea.

2.1. Silk Roads by Land and Sea: A short overview

Along these routes, besides the trades, sciences, arts, literature, and crafts and technologies were also disseminated into and appropriated by local societies. In this way, cultures, religions, and economies developed and influenced one another. Latest with the Third Millennium BC maritime networks between the Indus Valley Civilization and Mesopotamia, Bahrain, and Oman are proven. Subsequently, these maritime networks expanded throughout the Indian Ocean World. A major intervention was the expansion and predominance of the Roman Empire and the relocation of the capital from Damascus (Umayyad) to Baghdad (Abbasid) during the early Islamic period, the latter strongly influencing both Roads. However, these long-standing communication and trade networks changed substantially with the intrusion of the Portuguese and the following European powers after the 15th century into the Indian Ocean World. The collapse of the Byzantine Empire with the conquest of Constantinople in 1453 was the primary reason for the closure of the land network and its replacement by the discovery of the sea route to India by Vasco da Gama. However, thereafter and over time, the overland networks were resumed by different protagonists. The maritime European expansion after 1500 led to the colonialism of modern times and in one way or the other continues to this day.

Current initiatives to re-activate the historic networks both by land and by sea include the Chinese program ‘*One Belt, one Road*’ (OBOR) whereas the Indian Union project “*Mausam*” focuses on the maritime historic Indian networks in the Indian Ocean World.

Through a comparative, multidisciplinary, and diachronic approach between these two land and sea networks, this conference attempts a further reading of the past to shed light on the present and visualize the future of the areas along with these networks.

2.2. The Management

The conference will take place at the beginning of 2022 at the German University of Technology GUTech, Halban, Oman. Pre- and post-conference activities shall be offered if the situation allows.

The event is primarily planned as a face-to-face conference with additional digital participation on a Zoom platform.



3. Conference Sections

3.1. Cultural Heritage

In this section, it is proposed to consider key issues of the cultural heritage study for assessing the interaction between the Eastern Mediterranean and China along their land and sea routes and their interconnections, as well as the impacts on cultures, societies, and communities, on land use and territory planning. The investigation on the phenomenon of the “Silk Roads” requires the elaboration of new approaches for the identification, interpretation, and preservation of its cultural heritage and along with this, its presentation and sustainable management.

From the Bronze Age onward, the cultural routes along the Silk Roads are all characterized by the diversity of the natural and geographical conditions and the historical development of the various cultures along these routes; this includes the urban aspect with a clear impact on the dynamic processes of formation, development, and stagnation. Complex processes of the inseparable connection between culture, nature, and the historical process and mutual influence through communication and interaction, demonstrate not only the ways of human adaptation to different climatic conditions but also the ways of mutual enrichment through the exchange of human values and cultural traditions reflected in the remains of cultural and archeological sites that mark these important communication links till today.

Topics may include but are not restricted to:

Archaeology; Cultural Activities (tangible and intangible e.g., Architecture, Arts, Planning, Politics, Religions, Travelling); Cultural Adaptation (tangible and intangible); Cultural Landscapes; Cultural Routes and Heritage Corridors; Heritage Management; Intangible Heritage; Linear and Serial Heritage; Shared Heritage; Living Heritage; Underwater Heritage; World Heritage

3.2. Silk Roads and Natural Resources

Since the early Bronze Age, the regional distribution of metalliferous resources had an impact on trade routes on land and sea in the Middle East. On one hand, the high demand for copper and its alloys for tools and weapons played an important role for the development of mining and metallurgy

in the region. On the other hand, it led to deforestation due to charcoal production. People needed high caloric wood like Acacia and mangrove wood. Consequently, many ecosystems were diminished or got lost.

The availability of natural resources like oil, gas, water as well as metalliferous and industrial minerals will be a key aspect in the near future for the improvement of existing and revitalizing of ancient trading corridors. Geoscientific research can contribute to an efficient exploration and more sustainable use of natural resources in the region.

Coastal areas are one of the preferred settlement sites not only in Oman. The main reason is the easy access to protein as the sea is rich in fish and other animals which is a consequence of ocean upwelling. But coastal areas are also highly dynamic and fast changing environments with sea-level variability being the most important process. Recent research concentrates on the quantification of sea-level variability including natural hazards like tsunamis and vertical land movement. Furthermore, mangrove ecosystems are in the focus of research projects.

Topics may include but are not restricted to:

Natural resources; Mineral resources; Hydrogeology; Climate change; Geohazards; Geoarchaeology; Sea-level variability; Deforestation and land use

3.3. Humanities / History of Religions

The wider Indian Ocean hinterland was the birthplace of mayor world religions, including Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, and in the northern Red Sea and Gulf region, Zoroastrianism and Manichaeism originating from Persia / Iran, spread along the routes together with Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, and others having their cradles in the Indian Sub-Continents. Islam reached the Indus in 711 AD and came to Central Asia after the battle at the Talas river (751 AD). In addition to their commercial, trade functions, the overland Silk Routes as well as the Maritime Routes always served as communication routes to different parts of the Indian Ocean World as well. Many tangible and intangible witnesses prove the long history of cultural and religious transfers along these routes, among them Nestorian churches in Ak Beshim, today Kyrgyzstan, or on the territory of today's Turkmenistan, countless Buddhist monasteries (Dunhuang, Tarim Basin), and after the establishment

and expansion of the Abbasid Caliphate joined by Muslim mosques, tombs, palaces, and settlements. The different cultural landscapes are also witnesses to the change of religions.

Within the Indian Ocean World, the seafaring cultures fostered an open tolerant way of thinking with intercultural meeting points in harbor cities and emporia. From India, Hinduism and Buddhism were brought by ship via Ceylon to East and South-East Asia, followed by Islam. Nestorians, Manicheans and Jews transferred their religions overland to Central Asia and China, and with the Portuguese, followed by many other European nations, various types of Christianity overlaid wider parts of the Indian Ocean World.

The different ethnicities with their languages, cultural and religious traditions are in most regions authentic till today.

Topics may include but are not restricted to: Move of religions from core areas to peripheries / ways of encounters and modes of confrontation; Human stratification of societies / role of religion in shaping societies; The role of immaterial values (languages, historical narratives, beliefs, religious practices, etc.) and movements along the routes, Pilgrimage

3.4. On Tour: Tourists in the Indian Ocean World

In line with the general conference outline, this section seeks to investigate a specific form and manifestation of mobility and travel, namely tourism. We invite empirical and theoretical contributions from social anthropology, human geography, history, mobility studies and other academic fields. What are the favourite tourist destinations? And why do tourists choose them? What impresses them in particular? How and what do they report back home about their journeys to and stays in foreign places? What was and is their economic, but also most importantly socio-cultural impact – historically, but also in these days of “mass-” and “over tourism” – on their host societies. And how did those whom tourists visit for longer and shorter periods experience these visitors and guests? Did and do tourists change the lives of their hosts to the better or worse? Do hosts start to see their culture and history – heritage – see different in the light of tourist interests and favours? All in all, then, we wish to look at the socio-cultural and moral dimensions of tourism in the Indian Ocean World which are often overlooked when marketing and economic concerns dominate. Generally, we wish to identify in which aspects the modern tourism, as a relatively recent,

historically specific manifestation of moving, is “specific” and can be distinguished from other forms of travelling and travels generally – and where there are commonalities and overlaps.

Topics may include but are not restricted to:

Sustainable Tourism; Moral Tourism; Tourism and Ecology; Cruising; “On the Beach”; “Off-Season”; Tourists from the Hosts’ Perspectives; Heritage Tourism; Tourism and Cultural Authenticity; The “Archaeology of Souvenirs”

3.5. Historic Politics and Economy

The east-western extension of the Silk Routes covers with several thousand kilometers in time and space many political- economic systems. The motivation for travelling was primarily based on changing economic interests with many side effects.

In times of the Roman empire trade connections both to land and sea between the Eastern Mediterranean and the Han China come into full blossom. Famous for the maritime expansion was the *Periplus Maris Erythraei*, a sailors/ merchants handbook describing Western Indian Ocean coast harbors.

With the expansion of Buddhism through Gandhara to the north and further east, the Buddhist belief spread to China and later Japan.

Another stimulus come from the shift of the Islamic caliphate from the Umayyad Damascus to the Abbasid Baghdad with high demands on luxury goods from the Silk Roads. Latest since then Islam played a major role on the routes.

With the intrusion of the Portuguese in the late 15th century and with almost all European nations following later, the economic- political scene changed rapidly.

Recently China has been picking up with its ‘*One Belt, one Road*’ (*OBOR*) program the ‘Silk Road’ tradition again.

Topics may include but are not restricted to: The different religions, their politics, and their influence on the economy of the Silk Routes; The major states historically involved and the economic consequences; Systems of trade: centralized – decentralized, direct – indirect; Caravanserai and port city: regeneration, provision, trade, exchange

4. Important Dates

~~Deadline for abstract submissions: July 31, 2021~~

Extended deadline for abstract submissions: August 29, 2021

~~Notification of acceptance: until August 31, 2021~~

Notification of acceptance: until September 20, 2021

Deadline for final submission of papers: To be announced





5. Submission Formats

Papers: Submission of individual papers consists of an abstract (300 words) and a short CV (100 words) including contact information of the author(s).

Papers will be grouped thematically by the advisory board.

Posters: Submission of posters consists of an abstract (300 words) and a short CV (100 words) including contact information of the author(s).

Deliverables should be in a high resolution .pdf file, size A0 (84.1cm x 118.9cm.), portrait orientation.



6. Submission Guidelines

To submit your proposal please send the abstract, CV, contact details and affiliation to info@rio-heritage.org before July 31st. Please mention under which section and/or topic your proposal is best suited.

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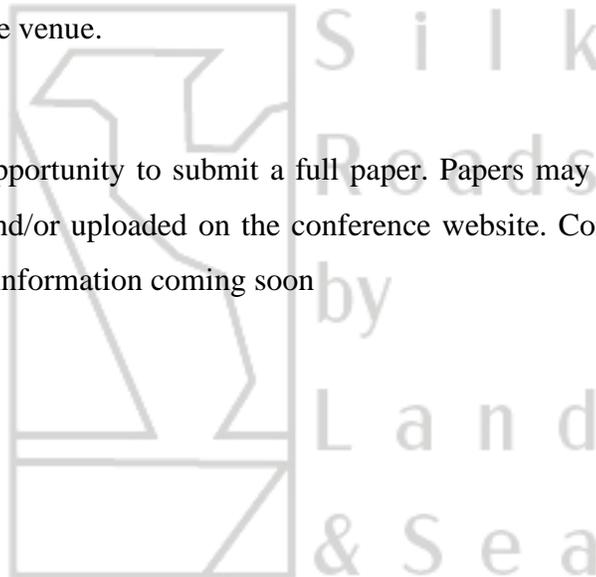
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After acceptance, all abstracts will be published on the conference website.

All accepted posters will be uploaded on the conference website. A selection of posters will be exhibited at the conference venue.

You will also have the opportunity to submit a full paper. Papers may be published in a separate volume as Proceedings and/or uploaded on the conference website. Consent from authors will be sought in all cases. More information coming soon





7. Program

Dates: March 9-12, 2022 (Tentative)

- **Pre-Conference Tours (Wednesday, March 9)**

Tour Muscat / National Museum / Cruise

Evening Event: Reception and first registration

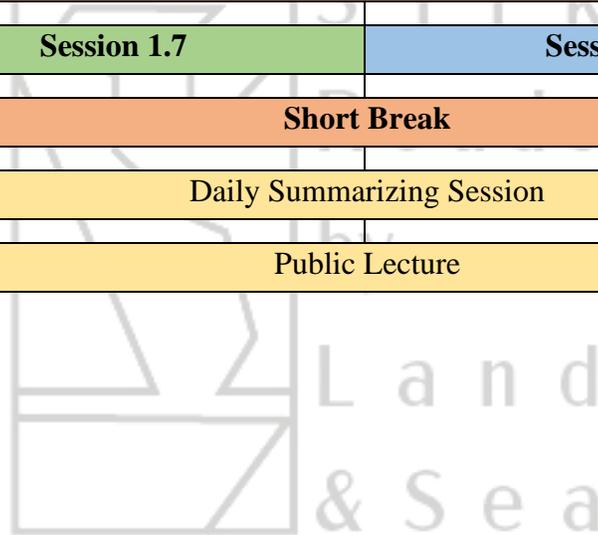
- **Post Conference Tours**

To be announced

- **Systematic Time-Space Structure of the Conference**

DAY 1		
Silk Roads		
	1. By Land	2. By Sea
08:30-10:30	Registration	
	Inauguration	
	Welcome Speech	
	Messages	
10:30-11:00	Coffee Break	
11:00-13:00	Session 1.1	Session 2.1
13:00-14:00	Lunch Break	
14:00-16:00	Session 1.2	Session 2.2
16:00-16:30	Coffee Break	
16:30-18:30	Session 1.3	Session 2.3
18:30-18:45	Short Break	
18:45-19:30	Daily Summarizing Session	

DAY 2		
Silk Roads		
	1. By Land	2. By Sea
08:30-10:30	Session 1.4	Session 2.4
10:30-11:00	Coffee Break	
11:00-13:00	Session 1.5	Session 2.5
13:00-14:00	Lunch Break	
14:00-16:00	Session 1.6	Session 2.6
16:00-16:30	Coffee Break	
16:30-18:30	Session 1.7	Session 2.7
18:30-18:45	Short Break	
18:45-19:30	Daily Summarizing Session	
20:00-21:30	Public Lecture	



DAY 3	
Silk Roads	
1. By Land	2. By Sea
08:30-10:30	Session 1.8
	Session 2.8
10:30-11:00	Coffee Break
11:00-13:00	Session 1.9
	Session 2.9
13:00-14:00	Lunch Break
14:00-16:00	Session 1.10
	Session 2.10
16:00-16:15	Short Break
16:15-17:00	Daily Summarizing Session
17:00-17:30	Coffee Break
17:30-19:30	Closing Session Round Table
	Passing of Resolution
20:00-22:00	Farewell Dinner

Stream 1. By Land

Max. 40 presentations

Period 1 (2.500 B.C. - 500 B.C.)

Average 10 presentations

Cultural Heritage
Silk Roads and Natural Resources
Humanities / History of Religions
Historic Politics-Economics

Period 2 (500 B.C. - 800 A.D.)

Average 10 presentations

Cultural Heritage
Silk Roads and Natural Resources
Humanities / History of Religions
Historic Politics-Economics

Period 3 (800 A.D. - 1500 A.D.)

Average 10 presentations

Cultural Heritage
Silk Roads and Natural Resources
Humanities / History of Religions
Historic Politics-Economics

Period 4 (1500 A.D. - Today)

Average 10 presentations

Cultural Heritage
Silk Roads and Natural Resources
Humanities / History of Religions
Historic Politics-Economics

Stream 2. By Sea

Max. 40 presentations

Period 1 (2.500 B.C. - 500 B.C.)

Average 10 presentations

Cultural Heritage
Silk Roads and Natural Resources
Humanities / History of Religions
Historic Politics-Economics

Period 2 (500 B.C. - 800 A.D.)

Average 10 presentations

Cultural Heritage
Silk Roads and Natural Resources
Humanities / History of Religions
Historic Politics-Economics

Period 3 (800 A.D. - 1500 A.D.)

Average 10 presentations

Cultural Heritage
Silk Roads and Natural Resources
Humanities / History of Religions
Historic Politics-Economics

Period 4 (1500 A.D. - Today)

Average 10 presentations

Cultural Heritage
Silk Roads and Natural Resources
Humanities / History of Religions
On Tour: Tourists in the Indian Ocean
World
Historic Politics-Economics

8. Registration

Registration Fees: 250\$

Includes: Evening Reception, Lunches, Refreshments, Festive Dinner, Daily Transport, Conference Material

Payment Procedure: Online payment through website / GUtech portal.

Fees for the pre- and post- conference tours will be announced at a later stage.



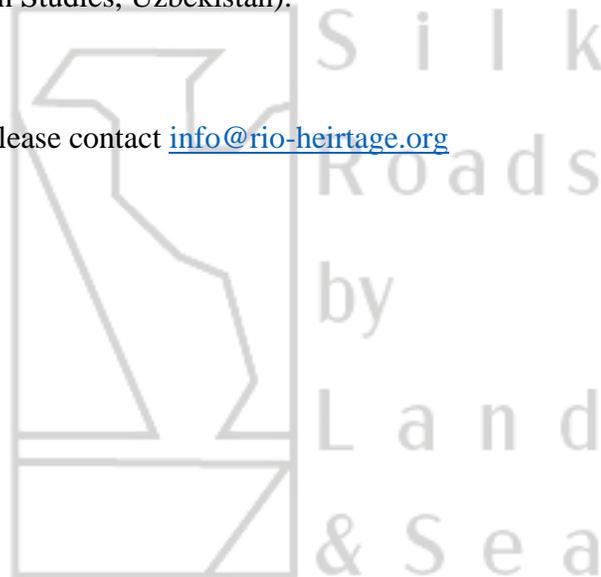


9. Advisory Board

Board Members

Wilfried Bauer (GUtech, Oman), Valeska Decker (Bonn University, Germany), Joachim Düster (Oman Studies Centre, Germany), Dennys Frenez (University of Bologna, Italy), Gösta Hoffmann (Bonn University, Germany), Michael Jansen (RWTH Aachen University, Germany / RIO, Oman), Hee Sook Lee-Niinioja (ICOMOS-ICICH), Roland Chih-Hung Lin (South China University of Technology Guangzhou, China), Stephane Pradines (Aga Khan University, London), Burkhard Schnepel (Martin-Luther-University Halle-Wittenberg, Germany), Fred Scholz (Freie Universität Berlin, Germany), Stefan Schreiner (Eberhard Karls University, Germany), Dmitriy Voyakin (Institute for Central Asian Studies, Uzbekistan).

For further information, please contact info@rio-heritage.org



10. Contact us

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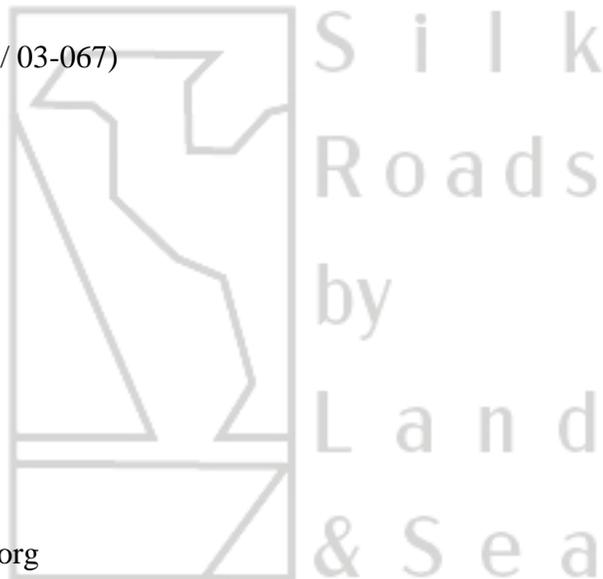
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